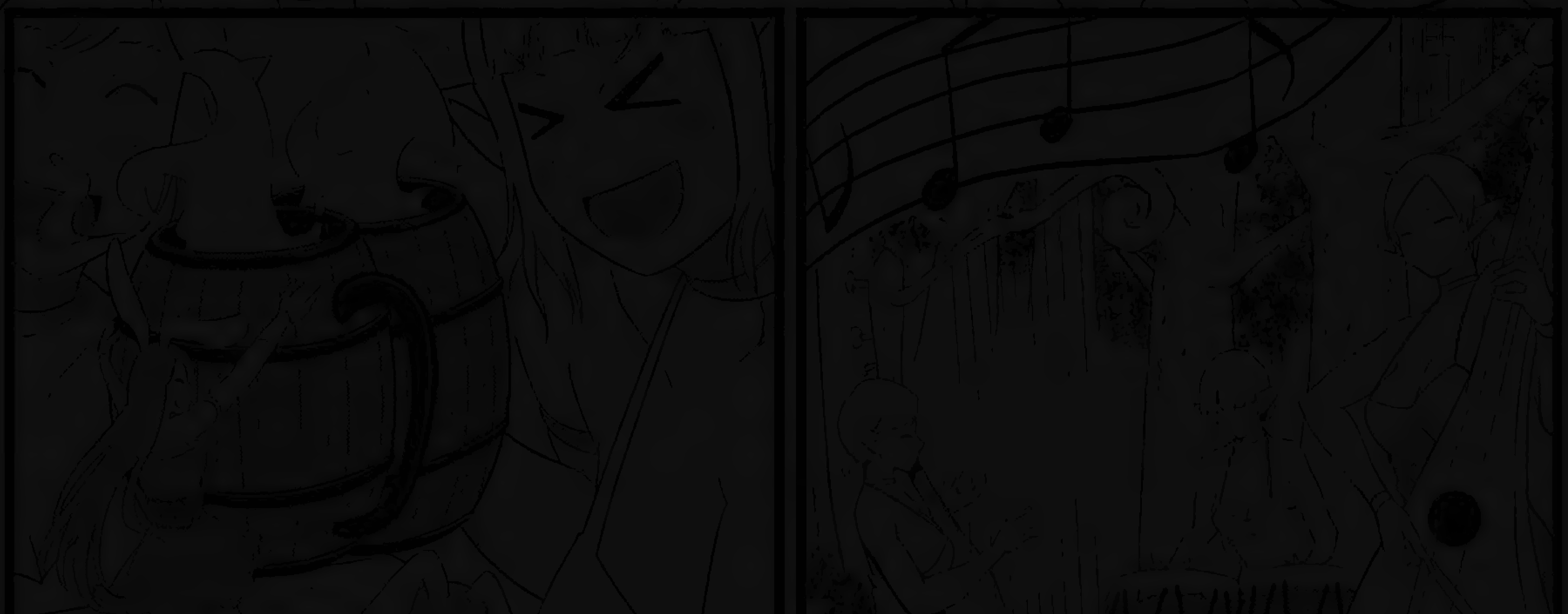
CHAPTER 9: THE ELF QUEEN AND THE DWARVES



THAT WASN'T VERY FAIR OF YOU, SIR TATSUYA...
IF YOU WERE HERE TO TRADE VEGETABLES, YOU SHOULD HAVE SIMPLY SAID SO...
Chug
Chug
Chug
BUT YOU'RE THE ONES WHO ATTACKED US...
ANYWAY, LET'S PUT THE PAST BEHIND US!
A Ha Ha
TATSUYA~! IT'S MORE THAN JUST THE VEGETABLES, THE DRINK HERE IS GREAT TOO! AMAZING, EVEN!
THEY REALLY ARE ALL VEGETARIAN, HUH?
Smoked meat is the best...
I'M SURPRISED THEY CAN DRINK THAT MUCH WITHOUT ANY MEAT IN THEIR BELLIES.
Nom
Nom
Nom
Nom
THE CARROTS WERE NICE...
BUT THESE CHERRY TOMATO THINGS ARE DELICIOUS!
Mmm!
REALLY? I WOULD'VE THOUGHT SOMETHING THAT SWEET WOULDN'T GO WELL WITH THE DRINKS.

THE QUEEN SOFTENED UP THE MINUTE I GAVE HER A TASTE OF MY CARROT.
KUH!
KILL ME!
AS THEY MAINLY FOCUS ON THE EXPORT OF MAGICAL GOODS...
IT SEEMS THE ELVES DIDN'T HAVE THE TIME TO PUT REAL EFFORT INTO THEIR FARMING.
PUT THAT VILE THING AWAY!
ADD THAT TO THE FACT THAT THEIR PROXIMITY TO THE FOREST OF NO RETURN MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO TRANSPORT FRESH VEGE-TABLES...
AND YOU FIND THEIR ACHILLES HEEL, THEIR INABILITY TO SECURE A STEADY SUPPLY OF FOOD.
SHOVE
ID TASHTES... GOOD?!
OBGH!
Munch Munch
WITH THE PALMTOP RABBITS ROAMING ABOUT, IT'S NO WONDER THEY WERE PREPARING FOR WAR.

STILL...
HOW ARE YOU ABLE TO GROW SO MANY VEGE-TABLES?
Nom
Nom
UM...
TRADE SECRET.
HMM... WELL, THEY DO TASTE INCREDIBLE.
I CAN SEE WHY YOU WOULD WANT TO KEEP IT TO YOURSELF.
Glance
ACCORDING TO MARIA, I'M PROBABLY THE ONLY ONE IN THIS WORLD WITH ACCESS TO FARMING SKILLS.
WE ONLY JUST STOPPED FIGHTING, SO THERE'S NO REASON FOR ME TO SHOW MY HAND.
Shh.
BY THE WAY, YOUR MAJESTY...
I'M GLAD YOU'RE ENJOYING MY VEGE-TABLES, BUT...

I'D LIKE YOU TO TRY THEM WITH THIS..
HM?
WHAT IS THIS?
Glop
SWP
A GLOOPY, WHITE SUBSTANCE...
NOT SOLID, BUT NOT QUITE LIQUID, EITHER. I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT.
IS THIS REALLY EDIBLE?
Shake
Droop
Shake

Wait, could this be your secretion?!
Laced with some form of aphrodisiac, I'm sure...
Huff
Huff
Huff
Huff
Badump
Badump
ARE YOU STILL ON ABOUT THAT?
C'MON, OPEN UP.
...
Shp
Nom
Munch
Munch
Crunch
...

Flinch
WHAT THE HECK IS THIS?!
THIS TASTE IS THE WORK OF THE SPIRITS THEM-SELVES!
THERE CAN BE NO OTHER EXPLANA-TION!
I DIDN'T KNOW SUCH A DELICACY COULD BE FOUND IN THE MORTAL REALM!

ALL THAT OVER A LITTLE MAYON-NAISE?
MAYO-NAYS?
NEXT TIME I STOP BY, I'LL BRING SOME SALAD DRESSING.
DRESSES?
I THINK YOU'LL LIKE IT.
I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THIS WAS MADE BY HUMAN HANDS.
SO, THIS IS HOW YOU TAMED THOSE ANIMALS...
I'LL MAKE SURE THEY DON'T STEAL FROM YOU AGAIN.
Grind
I DON'T THINK THAT WILL BE NECESSARY.
HAVING TASTED YOUR OWN...
I DOUBT THEY'LL CARE MUCH FOR OUR CARROTS.

AMAZING… NO MATTER HOW MUCH I EAT, IT'S JUST NEVER ENOUGH.
Nom
Nom
Nom
Hah…
IT'S ALREADY GOTTEN PRETTY DARK, HUH?
I THINK WE'VE SETTLED THINGS HERE, SO WE SHOULD REALLY BE ON OUR…
WOOSH
What?!
Ugh, the alcohol…
YOU'RE GOING TO LEAVE IN THAT STATE?
Snore
Snore
Pshh
Yeesh…

By the way, Sir Tatsuya...
WHAT'S UP?
You're tough, aren't you?
I'M NOT SURE WHY, BUT I GUESS?

I heard from those three...
That you're tough in other ways, too!

SNAP
WHY'D THEY HAVE TO BLURT THAT OUT?!
ZWM
!
OH, I GET IT...
YOU WERE WAITING UNTIL WE WERE BLACKOUT DRUNK TO STRIKE.

...
Glance
Fidget
Fidget
Flush
Flush
WERE YOU AWARE THAT THERE ARE NO MALE ELVES?
We continue our lineage...
With the seed of other races.
WAIT, HOLD ON.
SHE DOESN'T MEAN...

WE REQUIRE THE SEED OF A WORTHY MAN!
SPEND THE NIGHT WITH US!
I KNEW IT!
H-HEY, NOT SO FAST! I'VE ONLY JUST MET YOU ALL!
AREN'T WE SUPPOSED TO BOND A LITTLE FIRST OR SOME-THING?
Would you really turn away...
Ten elven Beauties?

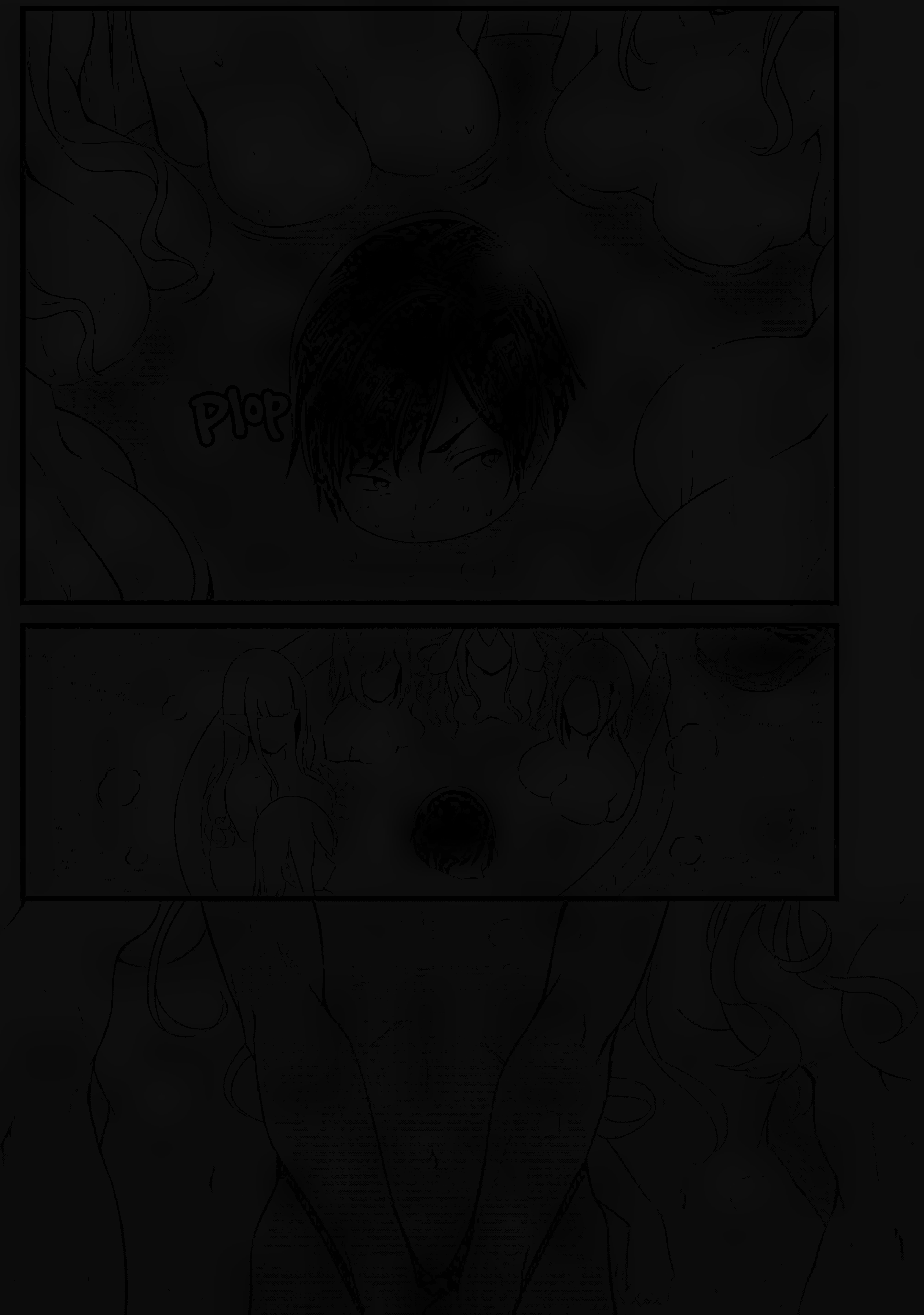
I would love nothing more.
A LOT, TOO MUCH, HAPPENED AFTER THAT...
IT WASN'T JUST A CASE OF STRENGTH IN NUMBERS. EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEM WAS A POWERFUL FOE.
I DON'T THINK I WOULD HAVE SURVIVED IT WITHOUT MY LORD OF THE NIGHT SKILL.

BUT, IN THE END, I JUST ABOUT MANAGED TO COME OUT ON TOP.
LONG STORY SHORT, ELVEN BODIES ARE JUST AS TIGHT AS THEIR WALLETS.

Ahh...
Sweet paradise...
Scratch
Scratch
Phew
Plop
...
ANOTHER HARD DAY'S WORK FARMING...

I'VE GOT GOOD FOOD AND PRETTY WOMEN.
BATHS SURE ARE GREAT.
I'D SAY THIS IS A BETTER LIFE THAN WHAT I HAD BACK IN JAPAN.
EVERYONE ELSE IS PLAYING ON HARD MODE, THOUGH.
CREAK
TAKE ONE STEP OUTSIDE AND SUDDENLY YOU'RE LOOKING AT A MONSTER NEST.
I REALLY AM GRATEFUL FOR ALL THOSE STRANGE SKILLS I GOT FOR COMING TO THIS WORLD.
Bathtime, bathtime!

It's time for a bath~!
THESE BATHS ARE SIMPLY MARVELOUS.
WOULD YOU ALLOW ME TO SPEND SOME TIME IN THE BATH AS WELL, MASTER?
I CAME TO SELL SOME STUFF FOR YA, BUT CAN I TAKE A QUICK DIP FIRST?
I'M HERE TO TALK ABOUT OUR TRADING ARRANGEMENT, BUT I'VE HEARD GREAT THINGS ABOUT THESE "BATHS".
....!

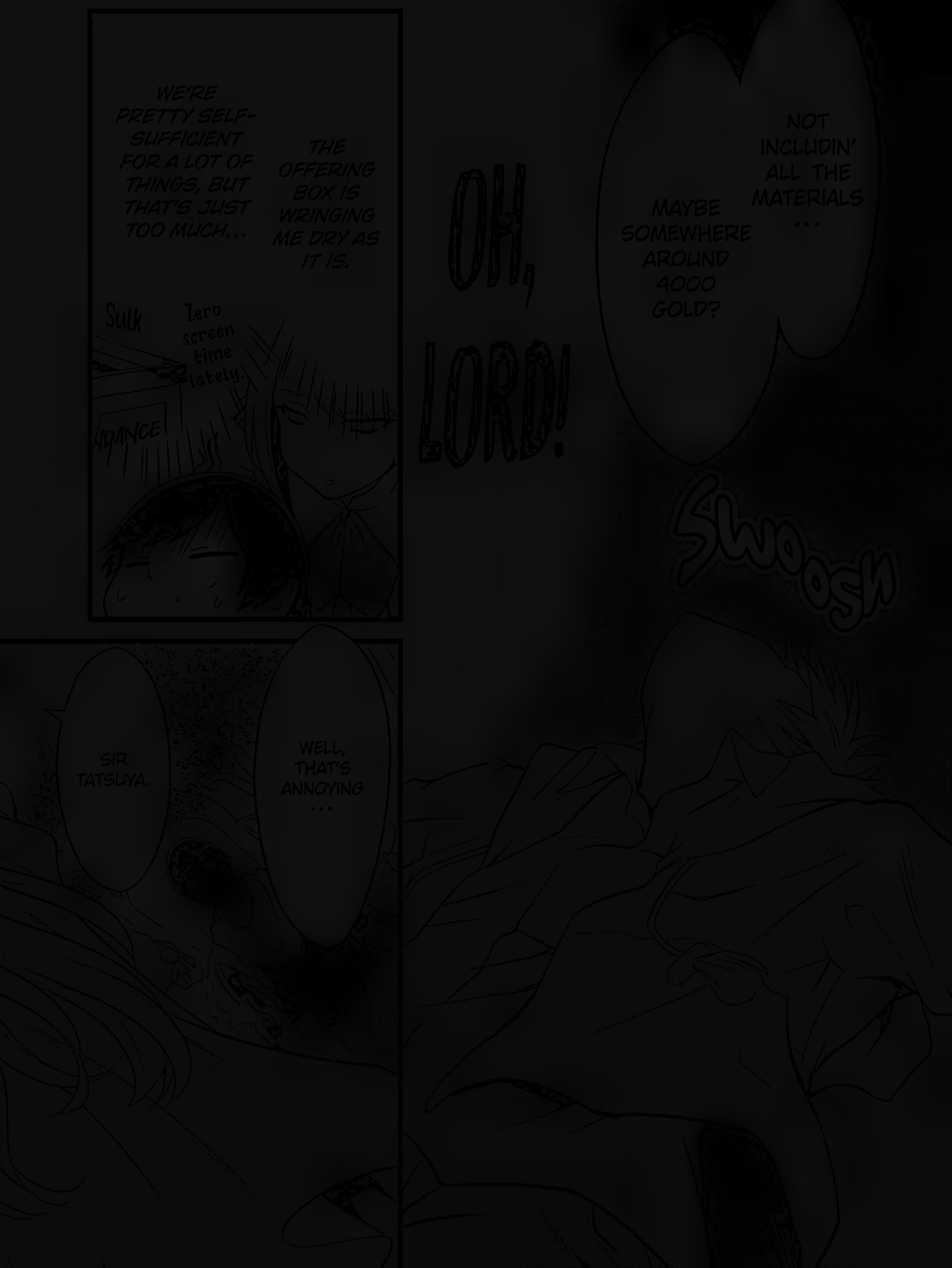

Plop

Ahhh!
MY SCREAMS FADED AWAY...
INTO THE DARKNESS OF THE NIGHT.

THE BATH BROKE?
YES, SONIA WAS SIMPLY FAR TOO ROUGH...
NOT JUST SONIA...
IT WAS ALL OF YOU.
WHAT SHALL WE DO?
JUST AS WE'D GOT OURSELVES ALL HYPED UP OVER IT, TOO...
I CAN'T IMAGINE LIVING WITHOUT ONE NOW.

THAT SAID, THERE'S A LOT MORE OF US HERE THAN WE HAD BEFORE.
Twitch
Twitch
WE SHOULD PROBABLY START THINKING ABOUT GETTING A PROPER HOUSE BUILT, TOO.
Rustle
I HEAR YA!
YOU AGAIN?
IF YOU'RE LOOKIN' FOR A PROPER PLACE, YOU OUGHTA CALL SOMEONE FROM THE VILLAGE.
YOU'RE GONNA NEED QUITE A FEW HELPIN' HANDS.
WELL, YEAH. WE CAN'T DO IT ON OUR OWN.

Normal
Worker
Guard
Forest of No Return
WE'RE TALKIN' A LOTTA PEOPLE, HERE. THAT'S GONNA COST YA.
OH, RIGHT. I KEEP FORGETTING THIS IS A HIGH-LEVEL DUNGEON.
EXACTLY. YOU'LL HAVE TO GET HIGH-RANKIN' ADVENTURERS TO ESCORT 'EM.
I'M GETTING SOME REAL DEJA VU HERE...
ALL IN ALL, IT'D BE A SEVERAL WEEK-LONG JOB WITH AROUND 15 TO 30 PEOPLE PUTTIN' THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF A DUNGEON.
IT AIN'T YOUR AVERAGE PROJECT, AND IT SURE AIN'T GONNA COST YA YOUR AVERAGE FEE.
Sigh
OUT OF CURIOSITY, HOW MUCH WOULD IT COME TO?
LET ME SEE...


NOT INCLUDIN' ALL THE MATERIALS . . .
MAYBE SOMEWHERE AROUND 4000 GOLD?
OH, LORD!
THE OFFERING BOX IS WRINGING ME DRY AS IT IS.
WE'RE PRETTY SELF-SUFFICIENT FOR A LOT OF THINGS, BUT THAT'S JUST TOO MUCH...
Sulk
Zero screen time lately.
DANCE
SWOOSH
WELL, THAT'S ANNOYING . . .
SIR TATSUYA.

I COULD SEND TEN OF MY GIRLS, IF YOU WISH.
PAY THEM ONLY WHAT YOU DEEM FAIR.
YOUR MAJESTY...
SURE, THAT'D BE NICE, BUT...
BEIN' REALISTIC HERE, AREN'T ELVES' BUILDIN' SKILLS MAINLY FOCUSED ON CARPENTRY?
IS THAT WHAT MISTER TATSUYA'S LOOKIN' FOR?
AHH...
A FANTASY STYLE ELVEN VILLAGE, HUH?
IT'S NICE FOR AN OVERNIGHT STAY...
BUT I DON'T THINK IT'D REALLY FEEL LIKE HOME.
HMM. IN THAT CASE...

WHAT ABOUT ASKING THE DWARVES?
Hi, dwarf here.
THE FANTASY'S BACK IN FULL SWING!
Tatsuya's mental image.
THE NEXT DAY...

AT A DWARF VILLAGE ABOUT AS NEAR AS THE ELVEN ONE...
I'M SORRY TO SAY THIS AFTER YOU'VE COME ALL THIS WAY...
BUT WE ARE RATHER SHORT ON MEN AT THE MOMENT.
Dwarf Chief Rudolf
PLEASE, CHIEF!

WE'RE FRIENDS, AREN'T WE?
This tea's great.
STILL...
House sitting.
ACCORDING TO THE CHIEF, THEY'RE ON THE BRINK OF WAR WITH SOME NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES...
War
Dwarf Village
Elf Village
Forest of No Return
Tatsuya's Place
AS A RESULT, THE VILLAGE IS CURRENTLY FOCUSING ON RALLYING TROOPS AND MANUFACTURING EQUIPMENT.
THE DWARVES ARE THE ONES WHO SUPPLY THE ELVES WITH WEAPONS TO ENCHANT.
IN SHORT, THEY ARE GOOD NEIGHBORS TO THAT VILLAGE OF LONERS.
NOT A VERY NICE WAY TO REFER TO THEM...
Sip
INCIDENTALLY, DWARVES ARE AN ELDERLY PEOPLE WHO SUDDENLY GROW OLD ONCE THEY ARRIVE AT A CERTAIN AGE, REGARDLESS OF SEX.

NOT MANY APPEAR PHYSICALLY BETWEEN THE AGES OF 15 AND 35.
THAT MAKES SENSE, THE ONLY PEOPLE I'VE SEEN HERE ARE OLD FOLKS AND KIDS.
I DO BELIEVE THIS IS A VILLAGE WHERE YOU MIGHT NOT LOVE NOTHING MORE, MASTER.
I-I WASN'T EXPECTING ANYTHING LIKE THAT!
MMM, TEA! I SURE LOVE TEA!
SPLOOSH
THAT REMINDS ME, DIDN'T YOU HAVE A GRAND-DAUGHTER?!
I HEAR SHE'S NOT UP TO MAKING WEAPONS YET.
WOULD SHE NOT BE FREE TO HELP US?
I'M SURE HER KNOWLEDGE OF BASIC CONSTRUCTION WOULD BE AN INCREDIBLE HELP!

PUSH
PLEASE! LET US HAVE HER FOR JUST TWO WEEKS!
C-COME ON, YOUR MAJESTY...
YOU'RE SCARING OFF THE CHIEF.
Hmm...
LET'S JUST TAKE A BREATHER, OKAY?
SIR TATSUYA, THIS IS YOUR HOUSE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT!
HOW CAN YOU BE SO DISINTER-ESTED?
...
CLACK
GRANDPA...
I DON'T MIND HELPING.

I KNOW I'M NOT QUITE READY...
BUT YOU SAID I HAD THE SKILLS, DIDN'T YOU?